**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE EXTRAORDINARY MEETING OF SHILLINGSTONE PARISH COUNCIL HELD AT**

**7.00 PM ON TUESDAY 14th JUNE 2022 AT THE PORTMAN HALL SHILLINGSTONE**

**PRESENT**: Councillors R McNamara (Chairman), I Suter, , P Acton, L Gasson, R Harwood, K Ridout, and the Clerk D Green.

In addition, there were approximately seventy- five members of the public present.

**931. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Cllr White.

**932. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATION**

None

**932. ISSUE UNDER CONSIDERATION**

The Chairman welcomed all to the meeting convened to discuss the sole topic of the planning application:

**P/FUL/2022/02998**

The Chairman noted that this was a proposal for the construction of 7 dwellings with a landscaping/parking scheme on land to the rear of Squirrels Leap and to the rear of the old Ox in Shillingstone.

The Chairman advised that the Parish Council had engaged planning consultant Jo Witherden to review this application on behalf of the village and the Parish Council and that comments from the meeting would be noted and included in the submission to the planning authority.

The Chairman opened the meeting to public comments.

**933. PUBLIC SESSION**

**TREES**

The issue of the number and nature of the trees proposed to be felled under the scheme was raised.

It was noted that application referred to 16 trees of which 6 were in fact in neighbouring gardens.

The scheme had identified 10 trees for felling, and applications to fell 3 of these had already been made and approved, including two ash trees said to be at risk of contracting ash dieback, of which there is no certainty.

It was noted that there was no clear landscaping plan for the replacement of felled trees. It was stated that the Woodland Trust recommends that there are 3 replacement trees for every tree felled and that the loss of the benefit of the trees adversely affected the green corridor that is currently present.

**IMPACT ON THE OLD OX**

It was stated by many present that this was a very important village amenity and there were serious concerns concerning the impact of the scheme on the only remaining public house in the village; it was believed that if the scheme was allowed to proceed, the business would become unviable and that it would probably close.

It was said that, in view of the proposed loss of garden area, that it would become impossible to hold large village community events such as ‘Steam ups’, Barn dances, Fish & Chip evenings, and fetes. Parking at the site would be considerably reduced and this would lead to overspill parking on the A357.

It was noted that the planned replacement beer garden would be approximately 12.5 x 13 metres and this would be only around 10% of the current garden area, and there would be nowhere for children to play safely.

Concerns were expressed as to why the B & B proposal under the 2015 planning application has not transpired, this being an integral element of Policy 11 within the Shillingstone Neighbourhood Plan (SNP). It was noted that with the Willows Tea room closing there was a loss of more B & B facilities in the village which has hardly any and which are certainly needed for tourism and business visitors.

Cllr Suter made the point that the SNP is designed for the protection of the village and its terms must be observed by any planning application.

Cllr Suter reminded all of the terms of Policy 11 of the Neighbourhood Plan which only permitted use of the land for holiday accommodation, tied to the pub to secure its long-term viability, and for the creation of 3 additional homes to be built as part of a comprehensive scheme.

It was noted by several people present that the 3 dwellings currently built were already provided for under the current SNP and that there is no provision for any additional dwellings.

**SAFE VEHICLE ACCESS**

Many serious concerns were expressed concerning the exit from the proposed access road onto the A357 next to Squirrels Leap, the access road being being much narrower than the expected meter requirement at 4.8 metres

It was noted that speeding vehicles already make this a dangerous blind spot for residents and patrons of the Old Ox, there being no pedestrian crossing, and where there had been a serious accident near Japonica Cottage in recent years involving a resident attempting to pull into their drive. This point in the road was described as a ‘racetrack’ with a blind spot at the very point where the access road would be located.

It was also said that there would be an obvious danger arising from having both the exit road from the access road and the pub from the same property.

The Chairman noted that the village Traffic Survey held last held year had highlighted the concerns regarding the roads issues throughout the village and the lack of safe crossing points.

**PARKING**

It was questioned as to whether there was sufficient parking provided for residents of the new dwellings which provides for 16 spaces plus 2 spaces on the access road, and much of this was based on ‘tandem’ parking where one vehicle parks behind another.

There were concerns that the turning spaces for large vehicles was too restricted, and there were in fact no plans for the location of refuse bins, both household and the Old Ox which has multiple bins and no provision for an area for dray deliveries to the pub.

**VILLAGE RURAL CHARACTER**

It was noted that the access road would inevitably facilitate access to a ‘back land’ development behind Squirrels Leap and for the proposed scheme at Stoneleigh Field.

The Chairman noted that the two schemes would appear to be one development. It was noted that the scheme, when considered in combination with the scheme for Stoneleigh Field, would not deliver any monetary benefit for the village, with the proposed number of properties for each scheme being under the threshold to receive any s106/community Infrastructure funding.

**FLOOD RISK**

It was noted that the scheme did not address any flood risks and there were potentially issues from a development of this scale because of potential surface run off to the dry ditch that ultimately exits into Honeysuckle Gardens and Hine Town Lane, where there are known flooding issues. Cllr Gasson pointed out that SNP Policy 11 has a specific requirement for a full archaeological and Flood Risk survey to be conducted.

A neighbouring resident, next door, was still in the process of building three house in the adjacent paddock and had to implement additional measures to satisfy the flood risks presented, and made the point that the area is clay and that soakaways are unsuitable for storm water in such a location.

**INFRASTRUCTURE**

Many present questioned whether there had been any consideration to local infrastructure including schools and doctors surgeries, given the likely impact of many additional residents, particularly with up to perhaps 15 additional children in the village.

It was noted that Child Okeford school is currently oversubscribed, that children from Okeford Fitzpaine Primary School have been moved to Shillingstone School and it is already difficult to get doctor’s appointments.

**GREEN LANDSCAPING/FOOTPATHS**

It was noted that pavement provision is only down only one side of the access road, and this is actually NOT the full 2 metre width required, and that this presented a heightened risk to disabled pedestrians in wheelchairs. It was stated that parents currently feel safe letting their children usethe footpaths through the Ox car park to the Recreation Ground, but that the proposed footpath was very urban in nature and that there is very little green landscaping within the scheme, which would be exacerbated by the felling of 10 trees.

**LACK OF CONSULATION**

It was stated by a number of residents that, contrary to the applicant’s statements, there was in fact a lack of consultation with nearby residents and that it did not have the overriding support of residents as the report stated, nor had the views of residents been considered in the design.

Some people reported being ‘door stepped’ and others had not been consulted at all, which was a completely unsatisfactory situation.

**SUMMARY**

The Charman summed up the issues of concern regarding the application under the headings:

* Impact on the viability of the Old Ox
* Rural Character of the area
* Safe vehicle access
* Parking concerns
* Tree felling and tree replacement concerns
* Flooding considerations
* Impact on local infrastructure

**934. DECISION**

The Parish Council voted unanimously to **OBJECT** to the application. Suitable comments will made to the planning consultant for inclusion in the comment to be made to the planning authority.

Dorset Council will be asked to refer the decision to the Planning Committee should the case officer disagree with the Parish Councils decision.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 8.00 pm.